842 no remedies are taken for barrenness. Others reported that women speak to the professional midwives, who give them herbal remedies, [278] anoint the abdomen with mountain lion grease, or give stew made of mountain lion meat. However, none of the midwives reported any such practices.

●847 Despite these attitudes, belief exists that pregnancy can be prevented or abortion caused. It is believed by some that only families of poor economic standing who already have two to four children attempt to use these methods. Others suggest absence of love in the home as a reason; some women carrying on illicit affairs are believed to practice abortion. A good many people seem to know of the existence of abortion and to have knowledge of the herbs used. Consequently attempted abortion probably is more frequent than people wish to admit. The [842] ideal of Cherán is the large family; people prefer not to talk about those who do not share the ideal and some refuse to talk about it. It is also said that the municipal officials are vigilant in punishing such cases, but as the penalty is [684] said to be a fine of $1.00 or $1.50 or a night in jail after recovery, this probably would not be a great deterrent even if the danger of detection were great.

847 278 Four plants are named as being taken to cause abortion. One, *artamisa*, taken with plenty of salt, was mentioned by one of the midwives. Another admitted to using iris root for this purpose, although generally the midwives claim to be opposed to abortion. The two plants most used, however, are *ruda* and *gobernadorcillo*, KUASA. It is possible that these are the same plants; at least descriptions of their use appear to be the same. If they are effective (and local medical men are sharply contradictory in their opinions), many unintentional abortions are probably caused, for *ruda* is a regular remedy for stomach pains. It is not taken, except intentionally, when pregnancy has occurred, as the herb is widely known as producing abortion. The herb is also believed to be helpful to women who have been unable to have children.

Much the same accounts were given of [842] *gobernadorcillo*. To have children, the herb is cooked with a tablet of chocolate and taken just before the menstrual period is expected.

847 To cause abortion, the root is mashed to obtain
278 the juice. The latter is strained and taken mixed in a liter of water. *Gobernadorcillo* is
[844] also taken to accelerate the birth if it should be slow.

One midwife purges barren women with the
842 bulb of the white lily. Two or three bulbs are
278 used; they are cooked and strained, and the juice given. Three days after the purge, the patient is bathed and "given a sweat" with cooking oil and ground salt rubbed all over the body. This cure is given during the time of menstruation to "clear" the blood. This cures the "coldnesses" of the patient or causes the harmful elements to be discharged. One patient now has four children. Another, barren 10 years before treatment, now has two children.

Involuntary abortions also occur. Pregnant
847 mothers are often fearful of this and sometimes will not go to curers when they are ill for fear they will be given a medicine which will cause abortion. A woman in her eighth month of pregnancy who was suffering fever and spitting blood refused to go to the curer for fear of being given abortive drugs. Drinking is believed to cause many abortions, and heavy work, such as lifting a log while helping to build a fence, is recognized as a possible cause of abortion. If the mother "likes something too much," for example, a horse or a kind of food, the child may be born prematurely, but apparently may live. Solar eclipses are likewise
[821] believed to cause early births. The midwife is sometimes called if abortion is feared. One midwife anoints the coccyx and abdomen with the white of an egg (which has been beaten on the ground) and also with lard and oil. Another midwife gives the flower of maize, tomato peel, a shoot of verbena, and a potsherd of Guadalajara ware. The potsherd is ground and the whole made into an infusion. This is taken twice and the coccyx and abdomen are rubbed with the white of an egg beaten on the ground.

Some people believe that the first child takes
843 9 months to mature, while the subsequent children take only 8 months. While women do not keep exact count of the period between menstruations, they have a pretty accurate idea of the proper interval, and pregnancy is recognized when menstruation fails to occur. Lassitude, heaviness, and loss of appetite are con-